

# SO CAL DX BUL



APRIL 2009

The Newsletter of the Southern California DX Club est 1947

The Southern California DX Club is a proud group of men and women of the world wide Amateur Radio community that enjoys communications with other Amateurs around the world.

The newsletter is published every month and is released to it's members on about the first of each month. Amateur and DX related letters, news and pictures are welcome and will be used as time and space permit. Articles may be republished with the recognition of the author and the Club. Any questions regarding this newsletter or it's articles should be addressed to the Editor.

(Some articles may be copyright.)

Meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month except April, June and December. Other times may occur

Repeater: W6AM/R145.48,(-) 100Hz PL

Please check the Club web site at

<http://www.scdxc.org>

## DX IS VISALIA



## BE THERE

April 17,18, 19 2009



Making friends all over the world using the magic of Amateur Radio

Sponsors of the International DX Convention at Visalia, since 1949





## THE PREZ SEZ

Hello to all DX'ers... I would like to start off by saying thank you to Arnie Shatz - N6HC...our V.P. for handling this months meeting as I was not able to attend due to work. I would also like to say thank you from both myself and my wife Sharon – to both Marilyn Bolnick – N6GIL and Sharon Spring – K6RID for handling the snacks in the absence of my wife. She came down sick and was also unable to attend. I heard nothing but good reports on them taking care of things!

We were both sorry to miss Bob Grimmick's – N6OX presentation. He always puts on a great one! I heard members enjoyed it very much. He is welcomed back any time.....

The board has been asking for suggestions on how we can better serve our members of the club. We have had suggestions from raffle prizes to the dwindling amount of chairs. We take each one to heart.

As some of you may have noticed... some of the chairs that the club owns have taken to walking off by them selves. Due to this suggestion - we will be purchasing some new chairs! They will be at the next meeting so you may sit in comfort and enjoy the meeting.

Snacks at the meetings have been enjoyed by all and will now include coffee by request. My wife is also looking into more Sugar free desserts.

Of course....there will be no meeting in the month of May as we will all be in Visalia! Hope all of you have signed up and made your reservations. Don't forget about Bubba's Bar-B-Que on Thursday night. You can saddle up on the bull and show off what you're made of! Fun and laughs should be had by all!

Hope you were able to get out and make some new contacts during the contest....I know I did! It's always fun to get a new contact you have worked so hard to make. I made some new ones and did some band filling. It was a blast!

Take care everyone....Hope to see you in Visalia!  
Tom Paquette – N6OT  
SCDXC President

## ARNIE'S BLARNEY FOR APRIL 2009

April is probably the favorite month for Southern California Dxers. It's time for Visalia! There is no club meeting in Culver City in deference to the DX convention.



Our March 12 meeting was underwhelming in regard to attendance. We did have some faces show up that have not recently attended. It was great to see Alan (AA6DW), Doug (N6RT), Paul (N6LL), Peter (K6PSK), Harv, (W8DX), Doug (W6HB), Joe (NZ6L) and Norm (NQ6Z). I hope all of you will be able to make the SCDXC meeting a regular part of your monthly schedule. Bob (N6OX) treated us to an excellent presentation about his TS7C DXpedition.

Fred Roberts (W6TKV) is recovering from heart surgery. If you have a moment, please consider dropping him a note or e-mail ([W6TKV@arrl.net](mailto:W6TKV@arrl.net) or [FRoberts-W6TKV@att.net](mailto:FRoberts-W6TKV@att.net)) to wish him a speedy recovery. The Riverside radio club has their monthly meeting on the same date as our meeting making it impossible for Fred to attend the DX club gathering on Thursday evening.

For those of you who would like to receive birthday wishes from the club, please send me the month of your birth and I will include it in the BULLETIN.

The big winners of our March raffle were Bill (N6RV) – The Secret Wireless War, Skip (KJ6Y) – The ARRL Handbook, Joe (K5KT) – YASME and Dan Weil DXpeditions, Kris (KC6TOD) – Low Band DXing, Mel (K6SY) – Up Two, Jim (WB6OFE) – W6AM, John (KC6TTV) – HF Antennas and Jeff (K6JW) – The Complete DXer.

I trust it is common knowledge that the club loses \$100.00 to \$200.00 at each club raffle! Sometimes we lose more. Although we are not a Fortune 500 company, I think we should try to at least come close to breaking even on the cost of our raffles. There is an element in the club that believes it is acceptable to be in the red every month because we make enough money from Visalia to subsidize the raffle. I think the money generated from Visalia should go back to the DX world in the form of grants to DXpeditions or to the NCDXF. We do contribute to the NCDXF, some DXpeditions and sponsor two plaques for CQ contests. But we could do more, such as sponsoring an ARRL DX contest plaque(s).

Should the club continue to subsidize the raffles, require the raffles to be self sustaining or eliminate the raffle? E-mail me: [N6HC@aol.com](mailto:N6HC@aol.com) with your choice. It doesn't seem to matter how "desirable" the raffle prizes are to the meeting attendees as to how much money is spent in purchasing raffle tickets. In February we had close to \$500.00 worth of prizes but collected a little over HALF that amount. For the March meeting we spent a little less than \$300.00 and again collected a little over HALF that amount.

Attendance at our monthly meeting is key to the viability of the raffle and the quality of speakers that we can attract, not to mention the viability of the club as a whole. More people in the audience mean a more engaged speaker and more raffle tickets sold. Take stock of the club members in your immediate area and consider car-pooling to the meeting. A call to your car pool buddies every month reminds them of the upcoming meeting, saves gas and makes the commute to the meeting site more enjoyable. The most common excuse I hear from members who don't attend the meetings is that "it's too far to travel." Culver City is central to our catchment area, so the meeting site will not change anytime soon. Traffic is a sad fact of life in the Southland. As long as we hold meetings near peak driving time, we can expect traffic snarls. Use the club roster to identify members near you and set up a commuting game plan. Even better, recruit new club members from your neighborhood and set up a car pool with them. It is a shame to only attract 30-35 members to a club that has a paid membership of over 150.

I hope all of you can attend the International DX convention April 17-19, 2009 in Visalia at the Holiday Inn.

Arnie N6HC, Vice-President, Southern California DX Club, [N6HC@aol.com](mailto:N6HC@aol.com)

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From: Oscar Gancedo <[ec1ae@hotmail.com](mailto:ec1ae@hotmail.com)> Conversation: DXpedition Saint Barthelemy (FJ)  
Hello Radio friend:

Next month, 7 of april starts until 12 of April, EB1HF Oscar and Pablo EC1DPM start a DXPedition in Saint Barthelemy (FJ) IOTA NA146 only in digital modes, principally in RTTY, the call is FJ/EB1HF and/or FJ/EC1DPM in the bands of 20, 15 and 10 meter. I am the qsl manager, EC1AE, and the confirmation only direct with (SAE+2\$) or (SAE+1IRC) VALID CN01 IRC This is the address

P.O. Box: 921 E-33080 Oviedo, SPAIN

For more info or questions please contact with me:

Oscar Gancedo EC1AE

[ec1ae@hotmail.com](mailto:ec1ae@hotmail.com)

Many thanks for read this email, 73s

Comparte tus fotos con tus amigos. Más fácil con Windows Live <<http://download.live.com>>



## THE EDITOR

### Aliens Abandon the 40 Meter Band!

Wow! It is already late March! We are preparing for our annual trek to Visalia. I hope we get the opportunity to see everyone up there this year. It historically has been a time to refresh and recharge. For the past 30 years this has been a ramp down of our chaotic pace and a real opportunity to decompress. Now it is just the opposite. Life is slow and easy in retirement and it is a ramp up to prepare for the trip, travel there, and come back. It is still a break from our daily routine, a pleasant drive, and we enjoy camaraderie of friends we rarely see.

Speaking of friends we rarely see it seems that our monthly attendance of late is lacking. I have no room to judge in this regard. With a very light work load the last years I did work and nothing going on at night I opted to flop down in front of the TV and veg. Sure I got on the air and it seems like email and other activities satisfied my need to stay connected with other DXers. In this day and age of lightning fast communication, including videophone services like Skype we have become more isolated and complacent about traveling. In one sense this is a benefit. In another it is not. We are social animals by nature. We need to get out and mingle. We also need to acknowledge others and be acknowledged. It is just the way we are. Being creatures of habit it is hard to overcome the inertia generated by our lifestyle nevertheless when we do good things happen. I know I am probably preaching to the choir here. Nevertheless if we want to remain a viable club that attracts newcomers to our hobby and helps perpetuate DXing then we need to be well represented at meetings.

So what can we do? Most inducements do not work or are only a temporary fix. The root cause is that if you offer an inducement it implies the actual meeting is not worth the trip and our club meetings are great! This predestinates failure. The best solution is a distributed, grass roots effort. We all know someone who for one reason or another has stopped attending. We all know someone who is not a DXer and enjoys seeing presentations about exotic places. Why not invite them. How about carpooling? How about driving so they will not bail out? If one person brings 6 people then our attendance goes up 20%. If everyone brings one person then our attendance goes up 100%! Hey if we do that for 3 months we have a dinner group! It may become a pleasant habit! Many hands make the job easy. Make the effort. Invite a friend.

You will notice that we have two new columns and a few fledgling ones. Arnie has stepped up to the task of interviewing members for our member profile column. When I first read his email naming the members he selected I did not understand it. Then I read his first article and it became infinitely clear and I applaud him for his creativity and focus! Did I pique your curiosity? Go read the profile and see for yourself! The second column is the 25 years ago and 50 years ago column. The intention is to highlight the activities of the club during those periods. I still need bulletins from those eras and input from members who attended back then. I am currently using the internet to pull out stories from then. The first two articles however were so important, that I thought it would be sufficient as something we all remember and recollect. The 25 year ago entry is etched in my memory as the greatest tragedy in our hobby in my lifetime and the 50 year ago entry a fitting farewell to a friend and fellow DXer in his own words.

A suggestion for a What's Up column has been fleshed out. For those who are familiar with Facebook it will be the equivalent to The Wall. The concept is simple email Steve or me with any interesting snippets describing what you are doing or plan to do in the very near future and we will post it. Keep it short and simple. For example Joe, K5KT, is putting up his DB36 SteppIR beam or Larry, K6YUI, just received his 100<sup>th</sup> QSL completing his 160M DXCC. Both of these are true and should be celebrated among the members. If you have need for assistance like an antenna party then send it in! This sort of activity serves two purposes. First it lets everyone know you are alive and breathing (well breathing at least) and that you are doing something interesting. Second it is motivation for people to look at what they are doing and inform others. If you are doing nothing maybe it will be motivation to do something that is charbroiled on the back burner. Since this is an on demand column the length and even its presence in the BULLETIN is month to month. As always we are happy to receive and publish articles from the general membership.

Finally it has been brought to our attention that not much in the way of DX announcements is published in our newsletter. It did not occur to me at first to have activity reports or upcoming DXpeditions in the newsletter. The reason was simple. I subscribe to The Daily DX. Now I already hear in the back of my head someone saying that not everybody subscribes to a DX newsletter. Well there are free sites that you can visit. Though they may not be instant they are pretty good. The websites below as well as the DX cluster would be more than what we could do with a monthly periodical. That said we still want to have announcements and even articles from club members who are planning operations. This is good club unique information and we would love to break it to the DX community in general! If there is a call for activity reports from the membership I have no objection to editing and publishing them. Remember however that I have to receive the reports 3 ½ weeks before the club meeting. That makes them almost obsolete in this day and age.



N0HR DXpedition Map <http://www.n0hr.com/wk34/> NG3K DXpedition Announcements <http://www.ng3k.com/misc/adxo.html>

425 DX News <http://www.425dxn.org/> [livepage.apple.com](http://livepage.apple.com) AC6V DXpeditions Page <http://www.ac6v.com/dxpeditions.htm>

DX Info of all kinds at DXing.info <http://www.dxing.info/> <http://www.dxpeditons.org/>

DX Summit (Real Time DX Cluster) <http://www.dxsummit.fi/>

How about going on your own DXpedition? DX Holiday <http://www.dxholiday.com/>

OK that is all for this month. Hold on! I forgot to mention the headline! I know you read all the way through the column desperately trying to decipher its meaning. Well the meaning is simple... **April Fools!**... 73, Bill N6RV, [n6rv@scdxc.org](mailto:n6rv@scdxc.org)

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See you at EMCOMMWEST/Pacificon!

Pacificon 2009 to be hosted by EMCOMMWEST, May 1, 2, and 3, at the Circus Circus Hotel, Reno, NV

On February 15, I learned that the Mt. Diablo Amateur Radio Club had decided not to sponsor the Pacificon Convention this year. They have done an outstanding job of running Pacificon every year since 1992, and this decision was made by their Pacificon Committee, based on the current economic downturn, and unsuccessful negotiations with the host hotel. Realizing the difficulty of finding a replacement for the Mount Diablo Amateur Radio Club, that with an experienced committee spends nearly a year planning this successful event, I decided to contact EMCOMMWEST, the second largest Amateur Radio Convention in the Pacific Division. They very kindly accepted, knowing the marriage of the two events would require an expansion of program matter, and the addition of Friday presentations. I am truly grateful to the entire EMCOMMWEST team for their decision. The Mt. Diablo Amateur Radio Club has been very supportive of this effort, and is making all of their speaker, vendor, and organizational information available to the EMCOMMWEST team. The keynote speaker will be Steve Ewald, WV1X, Field Organization Supervisor from ARRL HQ; and the banquet speaker will be Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH, who was in charge of Amateur Radio rules enforcement at the FCC when he retired. I hope many of you will be able to attend this year's Pacificon. More information is available at <pacificon.org <<http://pacificon.org/>>

## MEMBER PROFILE – W6OM

Ron Weaver  
13691 Solitaire  
Irvine, CA 92620  
[W6OM@cox.net](mailto:W6OM@cox.net)

By Arnie Shatz, N6HC

A new column that you can expect to see monthly will be the “Member Profile” by roving reporter Arnie Shatz, N6HC. I would like to highlight those dues paying members of our club that find it difficult to attend meetings. This month I will introduce you to Ron Weaver, W6OM, who resides in Irvine, California. He has two children. His daughter, Jennifer, lives in Fullerton and is KW6JEN. His son, Ron, Jr., lives in Bavaria, Germany and holds the call KW6RON. Due to his responsibilities as CEO of Systemonics, Inc., a software development company, Ron is unable to join us for our monthly meetings.

Ron states that he “can’t imagine not being a radio amateur”. The hobby permeates his business as well as his free time. Almost all of his business associates around the world are radio amateurs.

He was born in Pasadena, California in 1948 and attended Pasadena High School. He matriculated at UCLA majoring in Clinical Psychology and minoring in French. His post graduate degrees were earned in Paris with Masters degrees in Psychology and French Literature.

His interest in amateur radio was kindled by an experience that happened on his way home from elementary school one rainy, Thursday afternoon. He was rooting through some trash on the sidewalk and found a Zenith short wave receiver. He ran home and got his Radio Flyer wagon and carted the treasure to his garage. He didn’t know what this box was but he gathered up all his money from his paper route and landscaping businesses and removed all the vacuum tubes from the radio. He hopped onto his bicycle and went to DOW Radio where the tubes were tested and the bad ones replaced. He bought a roll of wire for an antenna which he hung in the trees around his house.



Ron at his modern DX & contesting home station



Eureka! The radio worked! He heard a station in Texas in contact with a station in Australia and his life changed forever. Visions of faraway lands danced in his mind and he knew immediately he wanted to talk to other people around the world on this magic media of radio.

He went to the library and checked out all the books he could find on amateur radio, the ARRL Handbook, and the ARRL license manual. His passion for radio was aided by his father who helped him learn CW and understand radio theory. His Elmer was George Hutchins who held the license 6OM pre WW2 and W6OM post WW2.



Ron in the operator's seat of his vintage AM station

At age 11, little Ronny became WV6CZH and with his Novice ticket, a Heathkit DX-20 and that Zenith receiver that he , he began talking to the world. His first DX contact was with UA3AB on 40 meters CW. He is still in contact with Andy and has visited him in Russia. His second DX contact was with FO5IW. Stan is now a business partner in a resort that he and Ron own on Bora Bora. His antennas were a zip cord 40 meter dipole and a two element home brew quad. Within the year he upgraded

to General Class and held the call sign WA6CZH. In the late 1970s he upgraded to Extra Class and was awarded the two letter call sign N6VO. When the vanity call sign program was started, he changed his call to W6OM in honor of his Elmer from childhood days.

Ron has operated around the world. He currently is FO5VO when he is in French Polynesia. He was UA3OM in Russia, 5H3VO in Tanzania, W6OM/PY2 in Sao Paulo, A35RW in Tonga and has been a guest operator at BY1PK. He has operated from France, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Romania, India and the United Kingdom. Ham radio has opened many international doors for Ron and he has been hosted by many high ranking government officials in the countries that he has visited.

He has been published in QST, CQ and Electric Radio, penning technical articles on antennas, component testing, and restoration of vintage electronics. In the true spirit of amateur radio, he is now the Elmer for many other ham radio wannabes by being a technical resource and holding CW classes.

He is an accomplished radio operator and has earned DXCC Honor Roll status on CW and SSB, 7 band DXCC, 4 band WAZ, 5 band WAC, and 5 band WAS among many other awards. The "musical rhythm" of CW makes copying Morse code his favorite operating mode but he has recently gravitated back to amplitude modulation. His modern station includes a Kenwood TS-2000 transceiver with a Heathkit SB-220 amplifier. Antennas include a Cushcraft A-4 with the 40 meter add-on kit, an inverted vee dipole for 80 meters and a shunt fed tower for 160 meters.

But his pride and joy is an AM Bauer 707 commercial transmitter that, in another life, was the voice of 1690 AM – Family Home Radio in Chico, California. His receivers are a cherry Collins 75A4 with a National NC-300 as back-up. Ron puts this station through its paces every Wednesday evening on the AM International net on 3.870 MHz.

As many of you may be aware, Irvine is not a tower friendly city. Ron lives in the Myford Ranch section, which was annexed by Irvine years ago allowing the tower to be grandfathered. There are many other hams in the immediate vicinity of Ron's station which makes operating somewhat problematic at times.

Ron has been a member of the Southern California DX club for more than ten years. He is a member of ARRL, QCWA, FISTS, AMI and the South Orange Amateur Radio Association (SOARA) where he is an active participant in local club activities.



Ron standing guard over his Bauer 707 Kilowatt AM transmitter

He is an enthusiastic Field Day participant with SOARA and loves to chase DX and participate in contests. His favorite contest from "the other side of the pile-up" is the CQ-WPX-CW contest from Bora Bora. When he is operating from home, the hands down favorite is the CQ-WW-CW contest. Ron's hope for amateur radio's future is that we may be able to attract new blood into our hobby as box analog radios slowly morph into software defined communications devices.

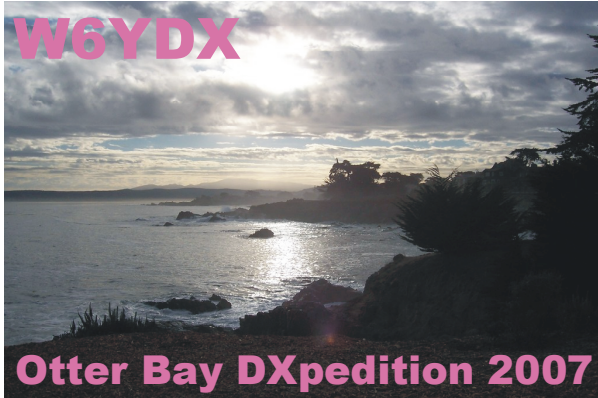
For more information about Ron, visit [www.qsl.net/w6om](http://www.qsl.net/w6om).

If you've read this far, it should be obvious to you that Ron is a renaissance man of epic proportions. He would be a welcome addition to our club meetings. Drop him an e-mail and encourage him to join us in Culver City and rub shoulders with the rest of the DX community.

Arnie Shatz, N6HC  
[N6HC@aol.com](mailto:N6HC@aol.com)  
Vice-President, Southern California DX Club

# Otter Bay DXpedition 2007

The planning for the Otter bay DXpedition started at the 2006 International DX Convention in Visalia. A group of experienced DXers were sitting around drinking fashionable adult beverages and trying to figure out where to go next. Two members of the group had been to Otter Bay the year before on vacation, and suggested we go there. After much discussion and several beverages at about 2:30am it was decided, we head to Otter Bay.



Otter Bay is located on the central coast of the PRC (Peoples Republic of California) about 190 miles south west of the PRC capital. With a population of just under 30,000 we would not be alone, but we were unsure of the reception we would get upon our arrival. Most of the members of the DXpedition were traveling from the Orange county area and one from the adopted hometown of Andy Devine. Local politics and customs of Otter Bay are very different from that of our home locations so we were careful not to offend our local hosts

We decided that February 2007 would be our target date, this would include the Otters on the Bay World Wide DX Contest weekend. The members of the DXpedition would include, Dan, N6PEQ; Kristin, K6PEQ; Willie, N8WP; Cheryl, KG6KTT; Pat, W7PZ; Jim, N6DHz and Linda (N6DHz's YL) We started by making contacts with some of the locals in Otter Bay and found them receptive to our efforts. We were soon able to book accommodations at the best hotel in Otter Bay, well it was the best in the western half of Otter Bay. We got rooms with a view of the Ocean (Avenue), which would give us a nice takeoff angle to the north and west.

We decided to travel overland as air travel to Otter Bay is very difficult and expensive. Our caravan of vehicles left the orange county area at about 5:00am. We made a few stops along the way including a visit to a childhood hangout of Kristin, K6PEQ. Fortunately for her we arrived too early in the morning for any of her friends to be there, this saved her much embarrassment.

We arrived in Otter Bay at about 1:00pm and immediately went about setting up our station. Right after we consumed an appropriate amount of complimentary wine and cheese of course. Once the station was set up we proceeded to take a tour of the local area since we had some time before we could collect our operating permission from the local communications authority.

Once we had operating permission in hand we headed out to dinner and watched Dan consumed massive amounts of seafood at the Real Cost Café. This turned out to be his favorite place for seafood and we had a hard time keeping him out of the café and on the air.

Let the pileups begin... Willie, N8WP made our first contact with JY1 and we proceeded to put some 222,316 Q's in the log over the next two days. The majority of our Q's were made on EME with some on phone, CW and RTTY also. We were able to maintain a rate of over 4600 Q's/HR by liberal amounts of complimentary cheese and wine. Our final Q was with 1S1A.

Once we were finished and had scored a first place in our category in the Otters on the Bay contest we decided to celebrate with a group dinner at a local watering hole. We met that night at Captain Bullwackers for a feast of pulled Otter Butt. This is not as nice a place as the Real Cost Café but it has the best pulled Otter But in town. The next morning we packed up the station and headed for home. This was truly a great experience and I think all of us will be meeting in Visalia again this year to discuss where to go next.

We would like to thank our sponsors ICOM America, Heil Sound Ltd. and The DX Store for all their support and backing without which this expedition would not have been possible.



Breakdown of contacts by band and mode:

Jim Shryne, N6DHZ  
[n6dhz@scdxc.org](mailto:n6dhz@scdxc.org)

	Phone	CW	EME	RTTY
160M	456	5	22,012	283
75/80M	1456	10	30,189	460
60M	1298	12	32,122	455
40M	22	99	29,072	409
30M	22,000	2	0	289
20M	123	83	9,023	454
17M	320	20	10,111	390
15M	677	64	13,405	352
12M	229	77	14,666	302
10M	4657	40	812	327
6M	10,220	12	14,989	312

**DO I SENSE A LITTLE APRIL FOOLS???**

## **PRESS RELEASE: DXPEDITION C91FC**

**It is hereby announced that a Dxpedition to Mozambique will take place from 9 April 2009 to 13 April 2009. The team will once again be lead by Philip ON4AEO who last year lead a team of operators to Lesotho for the 7P8FC expedition. The team is made up of the following operators: Philip ON4AEO, Kath ON7BK, Sid ZS6AYC, Adele ZR6APT, Gert ZS6GC, Lucas ZS6ACT, Jan ZS5JC, Deon ZS6ABR, Jose' ON4CJK, Herman ZS5LH and Steffi ON3AEO. The TEAM hope to be QRV on the following bands:**

**80M – PHONE - RTTY – PSK – CW**

**40M – PHONE – RTTY – PSK – CW**

**20M – PHONE – RTTY – PSK – CW**

**17M – PHONE – RTTY – PSK – CW**

**15M – PHONE – RTTY – PSK – CW**

**12M – PHONE – RTTY – PSK – CW**

**10M – PHONE – RTTY – PSK – CW**

**The QSL Manager is ON4CJK and either via the buro or direct. It is requested that direct cards must be accompanied with 1 IRC or 2 green stamps with a self addressed envelope failing which cards will be returned via the buro.**

**The QSL address is: JOSE' DUYCK, MOLENAKKER 56, 8740 EGEN, BELGIUM.**

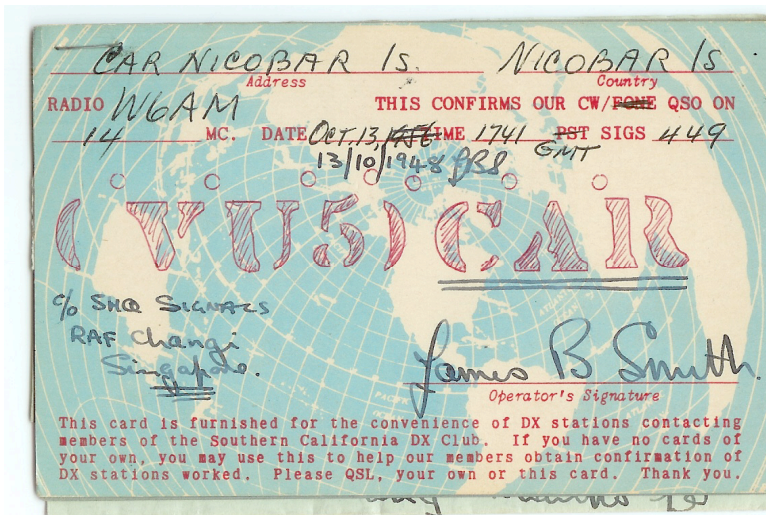
**More information regarding the expedition can be obtained from our web site at <http://www.c91fc.be>**

**Submitted by member: Edwin. ZL1BBO [edwinmusto@xtra.co.nz](mailto:edwinmusto@xtra.co.nz)**



# FIFTY YEARS BACK IN TIME

I thought it fitting to reprint this account of Jim Smith's CAR Nicobar adventure in his own words as the first submission to this column. The article came from Jan Perkins who published it when he was club secretary under president Jim Stevens KM6B (now W6YI) and BULLetin editor Mike Hudgen, W6YQ in 1982.



## Another rare one... vintage 1947: Car Nicobar

By Jim Smith Vk9ns

As a young signals type in the RAF, I was posted to Changi in Singapore. In those days (1946, 47, 48) much of our time was spent preparing Dakota aircraft for return to Egypt. This was one of the collecting points for material supplied under Lend Lease.

Very keen... we got stuck into BC375, BC348, SCR522 and all the Command

Series equipment. We marveled at the workmanship and top quality components used. These and many others were the source of bits and pieces for the Home Brewer.

Anyway, to get to the point of all this, one day my Commanding Officer informed me that I was going on detachment to the Nicobar Group. Car Nicobar Island was an important signpost on the way for the aircraft as they staged back to Egypt via Ceylon. A major high-powered MF beacon provided valuable enroute DF.

All too soon I was on my way for a one-year stint on this island I knew nothing about. All agreed, however, I was very lucky to get such a post. After a forced ten-day stay in Butterworth in North Malaya due to a polio scare (we were put in immediate quarantine on arrival from Singapore), we were finally on our way. We boarded the Dakota for the 500-mile haul to Car Nicobar.

The sight of the island was breathtaking, especially to a newcomer to international travel. A short two-day handover... and the newcomers were in charge.

Basically, the 12-man detachment supported the Signals Staff as we kept the beacon going under all the usual tropical faults. The climate was very humid. In addition, there was an airfield for a possible diversion for our staging aircraft. An idealistic life with hard work thrown in but a local population who thought the world of us (they had been occupied by the Japanese).

I became more and more amazed at Fitz, our radio operator, as he handled mountains of traffic all on CW. Several weeks later I could send and receive Morse at a reasonable rate; in fact, I even helped with traffic in due course.

Fitz had vaguely talked about the amateur bands as a source of plain language practice. As he patiently explained *es, bcnu, 73*, I started to monitor CW and phone on 20-metres. Only the one above knows how many BC610s were in use in the Pacific area. Many of the signals were just tremendous. All seemed to be AA: KG6AA, KP6AA, and KX6AA...

So it was the amateur bands for me and CAR appeared on the 20-metre band. My first QSO was with Robbie, VQ4ERR. I had followed him for some time and he was always outstanding. We were to touch base many times over the years.

Harry, VS7PH, (also XZ2PH) was also a strong guiding influence as he helped me along my slightly illegal path. Drawings of a simple 6V6-6L6 rig followed, and everything done to improve the signal. The transmitter was our backup T1154, an RAF transmitter on all our bombers. It was the usual MO/PA design with a massive chunking relay which changed everything from Tx to Rx in one foul swoop. On CW your arm ached and brain tired as you willed that relay across. The rig would drift through the 20-metre band; you reset it and the process started all over again.

Needless to say, I came to know the Sixes. W6AM, W6DZZ and others chased me up and down the band. I was to keep in touch with several of them over the years.

QSL? Oh, yes, we were quickly roped in to provide this, and most of my confirmations followed the same pattern: a letter written to confirm the QSO, sometimes with an apology about the rig. One Six sent me a 7-MHz crystal for doubling into the CW end of 20-meters. VQ9ERR was probably my first QSL and VS7PH the second. I have a photocopy of my letter to Robbie, supplied by him many years ago.

Ed, W6DZZ, sent me a ready-made card. Fill it up and sign. This is the one shown above. (*Editor: we did not have the original so we replaced it with the W6AM card*). Ed took me right back to my beginning in amateur radio, to Car Nicobar, and to my return to Singapore when I very soon became legal as VS1BQ.

# AND 25 YEARS LATER

Actually 26 years ago one of the greatest tragedies in our hobby occurred. In a bid to activate a very rare country, The Spratly Islands, a group of DXers came under fire from a garrison of Vietnamese soldiers stationed on Amboyna Cay, an island near the one they were attempting to reach.

The Spratly Islands are located in the South China Sea centered between Brunei, Vietnam, Malaysia, Philippines, and Indonesia. It is claimed by all parties and the territory is still under dispute. Vietnam's claim is particularly interesting. They claim it is a chain of islands that start a few miles of shore and stretches across the South China Sea. As you recall the region was still reeling from the Vietnam conflict. The Vietnamese government was extending their sphere of influence. They had over run Cambodia and after almost 60 years of warfare with France and the United States Vietnam was a strong military presence supported by both Russia and China.

The trip began in March, 1983. Four German hams Baldur, DJ6SI, Gero, DJ3NG, Diethelm, DJ4EI, and Norbert, DF6FK, travelled to Singapore and with the help of Henner, 9V1WC secured a German captain, Peter Marx who would sail them to Barque Canada on his catamaran.

The team left for the island early in April. On board were the four amateurs, the captain's wife and the captain. The catamaran carried all the necessities for survival on the uninhabited island. This included food, water, shelter, generators, fuel and all the radio equipment and antennas. There was little storage below deck and the fuel was stored above board. As they approached as they neared Amboyna Cay the captain reduced speed. It had been reported that either Malaysian or Pilipino soldiers may be present in the region. It was also reported that Amboyna Cay was in the hands of the Malaysians. As they approached the island a hut structure came into view. The team also spotted a watchtower. They immediately changed course to avoid contact. While changing course, a man in the tower was observed giving hand signals. A few seconds later the shelling began. The first shot fell short but the next shot struck the captain. He threw himself on the deck and, although bleeding badly, tried to keep the catamaran on course. Baldur was also hit in the arm and was bleeding as was Norbert.

Gero, DJ3NG was in contact with a station on 20 meters and advised him that they were under attack. As Gero left his position, he noticed that Diethelm, DJ4EI was missing. It was not actually known if he was shot or thrown overboard. He was never seen again. The boat caught fire and with the fuel on the deck it became apparent that it was lost and a chance of an explosion was imminent. Everyone quickly boarded the life boat, a dingy, while the boat burned. They drifted directly past the island with the garrison giving no aid to the party.

The shelling continued as they drifted farther away from the island. The dingy also was hit however they were able to plug the hole with cloth. In their haste they had not time to collect provisions or water and they were only partially clothed with no shoes. They used a small basket to catch tiny fish which they ate along with a few mussels from the bottom of the dingy. Still they had no water.

The only hope for a speedy rescue relied on the message DJ3NG had sent out on 20 meters. If the message was received and relayed U.S. Air Force planes would arrive in days. This was not the case. The Spratly Group consists of many reefs, sand-bars, and shallow areas; there is very little shipping nearby. The survivors drifted for days until they crossed into the shipping lanes. Everyone was suffering terribly from *Thirst*, there was little hunger. After about 8 days, Gero, DJ3NG, tried drinking some sea water during the night. He was dead by morning. They buried Gero at sea. The captain and DF6FK were both in bad condition and after several ships passed, on the 10th day (April 19) they were finally spotted by a Japanese ship, plucked them out of the water, and taken to Hong Kong. They spent several days in a hospital recovering from their wounds, severe dehydration and exposure. They had lost everything, money, equipment and fellow DX peditioners.

The surviving amateurs printed a memorial card, seen below, for the maritime mobile operation on the way to Barque Canada. This is one of the rare encounters of this nature recorded in the annals of amateur radio. The memory of this event is still fresh for those who were active back then.



2009

Golden hoover award



Wes ZL3TE

1<sup>st</sup> Place ZL for most contacts with ZL7T Dxpedition (16)

Dated this day March 13, 2009 and authorized by the Ham Band Sweeper

**W3SE/ZL3TE**

**One of our own down under.**

**Congratulations Wes**

**Sorry I can not make this bigger.**



# Last Month You Met me NOW MEET MY STATION

Here are some pictures of my desk with the third level complete. I still have a little piece to the right of Operating Position 2 on level 2 to complete. You can see a hole where one of my radios is missing. Also I have to put in the 220 VAC and the cable trays below the desk. Then I am ready for the 11 radio to 12 antenna remote switch matrix.

OK I said I was not insane but I didn't say I wasn't a little obsessive! Oh yeah... about those coffee cup...Bill, N6RV...[n6rv@scdxc.org](mailto:n6rv@scdxc.org)



Station 3

# **Radio Stuff for Sale**

**Submitted by Rick Samoian, K6SR**

**A friend of mine, Paul Turkheimer, WA6NKL (916) 787-5336 suffered a stroke a while back and is no longer able to operate. I am posting this to help him sell all his amateur radio equipment. Paul is located in Roseville, CA, please contact Paul or his wife Rose, directly if you are interested in purchasing, or don't be shy about making an offer, on any (or all) of the Items:**

- 1. Astron RS-35M, 13.8V P/S \$75**
- 2. Kenwood TS-450S HF Rig (10-160M no internal tuner) \$300**
- 3. Autek Filter QF-1A, audio filter, \$ 5**
- 4. Kenwood PC-1A, phone patch \$50**
- 5. 100' of RG-8A \$15**
- 6. Mil dummy-load-wattmeter 15 and 60W 500MHz? \$5**
- 7. Fluke 8000A Digital Voltmeter \$15**
- 8. 4 each, 811A's \$10 each**
- 9. Several 4cx250's. \$20 each**
- 10. Misc. rolls of RG-11 MIL-SPEC coax \$15**
- 11. H/P 400 audio osc. \$ \_35\_\_\_\_\_**

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## **DX IS**

**The 2009 International DX Convention in Visalia,  
Will be held April 17th to 19th, 2009**

**This is the 60th Anniversary of this event, which promises to be even more special this year than it has been in previous years. Special Attractions this year Include:**

**Contest Academy by the Northern California Contest Club and  
Radio Arcala Project with OH2BH & OH8NC**

**Special Guest and Banquet Speaker: The Hon. J. Scott Redd (K0DQ), Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy (ret). Breakfast Program: Desecheo, KP5 DX-Pedition  
For Complete Program Information, see <<http://www.dxconvention.org/>**

# A very interesting web site

## Check it out

Check out our web site - <http://frrl.wordpress.com> <<http://frrl.wordpress.com>/>

Technology, history, and commentary related to Amateur Radio.  
Plus... a few more topics thrown in to keep it interesting.

Redistribute this email to your friends if you find it interesting.

Below is a partial list of articles on <http://frrl.wordpress.com> <<http://frrl.wordpress.com>/>

----- Amateur Radio -----

### Operating

- \* Life on HF - DX Clusters using Spot Collector and DX View
- \* Life on HF - The Age of Power

### Technology

- \* Hands-on Electronics - Signal tracing a simple transmitter
- \* Hands-off Electronics: A little bit of Monica. A little bit of Erica
- \* Software Defined Radio: Burt Fishers (K1OIK) Review of Flex Radio 5000
- \* Direct Conversion Receiver: making friends with the SA602 IC
- \* Life on HF - The MFJ-1796 6-Band HF Antenna for Limited Space
- \* The Riddle of Kit Building - Why do they do it?
- \* Inside the Black Box of Shortwave Radio
- \* The Age of Super Heterodyne - Building the Ramsey SR2 Kit

### In historical context

- \* Long Live The All American Five. Or, Recovering a Piece of Radio History
- \* Commentary: Amateur Radio Beginnings - why kids today are not Hams
- \* How the RELAY got i nto the ARRL
- \* General Electric Research in RF circa. 1934
- \* History of Receiver Design - 1912 Regeneration and Building the TenTec 1253
- \* Collecting Heathkit Models SB-101,102 & HW 100,101
- \* Blast from the past - Our Kenwood Hybrid Collection

### OTHER TOPICS AND MORE

In society---The Linux Operating System--- Product Reviews---Organizational Behavior and Leadership  
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